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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
TUESDAY, JULY 1, 2008

In Today's Papers

Ambassador Wilson Comments on PJAK
Sabah, Milliyet, Hurriyet, Yeni Safak, Zaman: During the opening ceremony of "Innovative and Entrepreneur Youth Project," journalists asked U.S. Ambassador Ross Wilson about Seymour Hersh's latest story in the "New Yorker." Wilson said, "The U.S. does not cooperate with PJAK. We have no relations with PJAK. We see PJAK as a terrorist organization." When asked about PM Erdogan's trip to Iraq, Ambassador Wilson called the visit "a positive step for Turkish-Iraqi relations."

French FM Kouchner Praises Turkish Military for its Role in Democracy
All papers: France takes over the EU term presidency today. Speaking to European Journalists, French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner said that "the AKP closure case might have an impact on the EU negotiations, however, this is Turkey's internal issue and Turkey should find a solution to this issue itself. PM Erdogan is a wise politician. I am sure he will find a solution to this issue. So far, military played a very important role in Turkey. The Turkish military played an important role in democracy and undertook a great role in separating the government affairs from the mosque and religion. This should not be forgotten." Kouchner added that during France's presidency, two or three chapters will be opened up with Turkey.

Turkey Prepares for Concluding Arguments in the AKP's Closure Case Today, Chief Prosecutor Yalcinkaya will present his closing remarks on the case to close the AKP. On Thursday, the AKP will present its closing remarks. The Turkish press has exhausted this subject in the past few months, but today's media wraps up their respective expectations. Columnist Mehmet Barlas of mainstream Sabah notes, "There is only one way out for Turkey. Every political actor and every law must be in accordance with EU membership." In addition, Barlas notes, "We can return to our target of joining the civilization of modernity, democracy, and reality even if the party is closed." Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak writes in "Today, the Google Case Will Be Presented," Yalcinkaya presents a case "based on evidence collected from Google and not from legitimate legal

sources." Leftist Taraf calls the closure of the AKP, "The Calamity Awaiting Turkey." Columnist Ismet Berkan of liberal Radikal writes, "The closure case has poisoned the atmosphere," as this issue has even "pitted childhood friends against each other," and "divided the beds of husbands and wives." Rusen Cakir of mainstream Vatan writes, "If the AKP is closed, secularism could be weakened, the AKP will not be dissolved, the party replacing the AKP could win more than 50% of the vote, and Erdogan could emerge empowered as a result of the closure case."

Breaking News - 49 Additional Ergenekon Detentions

In a story breaking mid-morning today, mainstream NTV reports that at least 49 people, including leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet journalist Mustafa Balbay, two retired four star generals and the Chairman of the Ankara Chamber of Commerce, were detained in connection to the ongoing Ergenekon investigation. Tulin Daloglu has previously described Ergenekon in the Washington Times as, "An ultra-nationalist gang accused of inciting anti-democratic activities and seeking to engineer a coup against Turkey's Islamist-rooted government." Mainstream Hurriyet's website reports the timing of these arrests is "interesting" in that the news broke around the time the Chief Prosecutor Yalcinkaya began his concluding oral arguments in the closure case against the AKP, the ruling party accused of having Islamist roots.

Tuzmen: Lots of Things to be Done in Iraq

Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak reports Turkey's State Minister for Economy, Kursad Tuzmen, told the press after wrapping up contacts in Baghdad that Iraq could recover if it makes "good and fast" use of its resources. "For the first time, a foreign delegation held a

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meeting outside the Green Zone in Baghdad, and Iraq received this message," Tuzmen said. Tuzmen also said the Turkish delegation proposed the establishment of a joint industrial zone in Ovakoy along the Turkey-Iraq border.

Australia's Downer New UN Cyprus Envoy

Mainstream Hurriyet, leftist Taraf, Islamist Yeni Safak, and liberal Radikal report the former Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer is expected to be assigned the next UN special envoy for Cyprus. The Greek Cypriot administration, however, said Monday that the appointment of a UN envoy for Cyprus depends on the launch of direct talks between the sides on the divided island, according to papers.

Socialist International to Send Delegation to Turkey on CHP

Milliyet, Sabah, Radikal, Cumhuriyet, Zaman and others report in the first day of the Socialist International (SI) meetings in Athens, no statement was issued against Turkey's main opposition party CHP. Islamist-oriented Zaman claims SI put Turkey under "monitoring," and would send a four-member delegation to inspect the "anti-democratic" charges against the CHP. The paper also says CHP leader Deniz Baykal, deputy chair of SI, was not nominated for the post again. Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet reports at the meetings on Monday, the northern Iraq Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) was given full membership and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) consultative membership. Iraqi President Jalal Talabani was assigned deputy chair of SI, according to papers.

Cartoon in July 1st's leftist Taraf.

"The Socialist International" placard is broken into two. The "CHP" tag is pinned on the piece reading "National."

Cartoon in July 1st's mainstream Hurriyet:

CHP leader Deniz Baykal, at the "Ayas Mulberry Festival," says: "Let's call the mulberry a symbol of socialism!" Background: Baykal refused to join Socialist International's summit in Athens this week and instead attended a mulberry festival in Ayas. Press speculate Baykal did not attend the SI meeting because the CHP's stance on the closure case has angered a number of SI members in Europe.

Editorial Commentary on U.S/Iraq; North Korea/Iran

"Bush's Incompetence"

Fikret Ertan wrote in Islamist leaning Zaman (7/1): "The Bush administration made very serious and critical mistakes in the aftermath of the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Paul Bremer was appointed by President Bush as the second 'occupational governor' after General Garner. Bremer can easily symbolize America's fiasco in Iraq. General Tommy Franks, who served in Iraq alongside Bremer, is now testifying in an ongoing military investigation and is facing serious criticism. In addition, an important study about the Iraq war has been released by the Institute for Military and Combat Studies, an organization belonging to the American army. The study detailed the incompetence of the Americans during the 2003 invasion and the ensuing occupation of Iraq. Interestingly enough, the key figures of this period, such as Paul Bremer, General Franks and former CIA Director George Tenet were all awarded the 'Medal of Liberty' by the Bush administration due to their 'successes' in Iraq. Normally, America does not reward incompetence. However, the Bush administration managed to do such a thing."

"Nuclear Ambition"

Yilmaz Oztuna wrote in conservative Turkiye (7/1): "The people of North Korea are among the world's poorest and they continue to suffer from hunger. The contrast between North Korea and South Korea is black-and-white, though they are neighbors of the same race and speak the same language. While North Korea is ruled by 'liberal communism' even though these two terms are an oxymoron, South Korea

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shines as one of the wealthiest nations in the world. Despite its extreme poverty, North Korea developed nuclear weapons by enriching plutonium. Recently, the North Korean government announced its intention to abandon its nuclear efforts and destroyed a nuclear facility. In exchange, North Korea hopes to be taken off the United States' list of rogue countries. Meanwhile, Iran is one of the world's greatest civilizations. Currently, its nuclear ambition is not serving to its own benefit. If Iran makes a similar move and abandons its nuclear ambition, and if the U.S. takes Iran off its blacklist, not only Tehran but all of its neighbors, particularly Turkey, will take a deep relaxing breath."

TV News:
CNN Turk

Domestic News

- Luxembourg's Foreign Minister Jean Asselborn spoke to the press after meeting his Turkish counterpart Ali Babacan in Ankara. Asselborn said, "If the Constitutional Court rules to ban the AKP, it will not end Turkey's EU accession process."
- Prime Minister Erdogan met with Anti-Defamation League (ADL) director Abraham Foxman on Monday. The 1-hour meeting was closed to press.
- The Turkish Statistics Institute announced Turkey's economy grew by 6.6 percent in the first three months of this year.

International News

- Malaysian opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim ended his one-day refuge at the Turkish ambassador's residence in Kuala Lumpur on Monday. Turkey's Foreign Ministry announced efforts to find a solution to the situation were successful, thanks to the close cooperation between Turkey and Malaysia.
- Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will pay an official visit to Turkey July 2 to meet his Turkish counterpart Ali Babacan, President Abdullah Gul and PM Erdogan.
- France assumes the rotating EU Presidency as of Tuesday.

WILSON